

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 4, 2017

The Honorable John Carter, Chairman
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Carter and Ranking Member Roybal-Allard:

Thank you for your ongoing dedication to protecting our nation from terrorism. As you begin work on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, we respectfully request that you include \$700,000,000 in funding for the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), and that eligibility for the program be expanded to include the 36 urban areas with the highest cumulative national terrorism risk.

Homeland security is an ongoing mission that requires continuous attention and vigilance because the mission does not end. Since its creation after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the UASI program has proven to be the most effective vehicle for delivering homeland security funds where they are needed most: our nation's highest-threat metropolitan areas. The program assists state and local law enforcement in these regions strengthen their abilities to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from acts of terrorism.

We recognize that your leadership has guided the Subcommittee's continued support of the UASI program, and sustained the current funding level despite ongoing fiscal constraints and repeated requests by the prior Administration to realign or further cut the program. Still, the prolonged reduction in UASI funding below the FY 2010-enacted level of \$887 million has resulted in contracting program eligibility to continue the prioritization of funding to regions under the greatest risk of terrorist attack.

While we strongly agree that UASI funding must remain focused on the areas under the greatest threat and at the greatest risk, we are concerned that cities and urban areas that have experienced lapses in this crucial funding risk losing the increased capacity and capabilities created with prior UASI funds. Certain counter-terror capabilities require a minimal baseline annual or recurring sustainment funding, without which capability levels begin to decrease as planning is not updated, equipment is not maintained, refresher trainings are not provided, and exercises are not repeated. We are all too familiar with soft targets in diverse mid-size cities becoming more frequent targets. As the first line of defense, it is critical that local law enforcement agencies are equipped to detect, prevent and effectively respond to any enemy that threatens the safety of their citizens.

Therefore, we respectfully urge you to not only continue to restore funding for the UASI program by providing \$700 million in FY 2018, but that you also support retention of previously-funded improvements by accompanying that restoration with an expansion of eligibility to the 36 metropolitan statistical areas with the highest cumulative national terrorism risk.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

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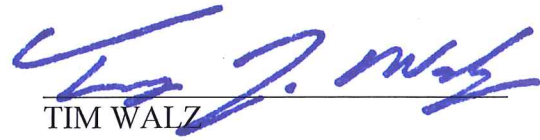
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